Cinematic Sacrilege and Pete Hegseth's Warrior Creed: The 'CSAR 25:17' Incident and the Assault on Ecclesial Authority

Douglas C. Youvan

doug@youvan.com

www.youvan.ai

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On April 15, 2026, a religious service at the Pentagon served as the stage for a profound liturgical travesty that highlighted the growing chasm between state power and sacred tradition. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth's recitation of "CSAR 25:17"—a text derived not from the Book of Ezekiel but from the stylized violence of Quentin Tarantino's Pulp Fiction—represents more than a mere cultural gaffe. It is an act of cinematic sacrilege, where the words of a fictional hitman were elevated to the status of a military creed, effectively displacing the Word of God with the aesthetics of Hollywood nihilism. This event does not exist in a vacuum; it occurred amidst a backdrop of unprecedented slurs and rhetorical attacks directed by the administration against Pope Leo XIV. By deifying tactical assets like "Sandy 1" and replacing prophetic warnings with a "warrior ethos" grounded in vengeance, the Department of War has attempted to create a state-sponsored mythology that is fundamentally at odds with the Gospel of peace. This paper examines the theological implications of this scriptural replacement, the erosion of biblical literacy, and the deliberate attempt to "excommunicate" the Pope from the American civil religious landscape in favor of a hyper-real, violent pseudo-faith.

Keywords: Hegseth, Ezekiel 25:17, Pulp Fiction, CSAR 25:17, Blasphemy, Pope Leo XIV, Warrior Ethos, State Liturgy, Sacrilege, Military Chaplaincy, Hyper-reality, Cinematic Theology, Religious Communication, Department of War, Vengeance.

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1. Introduction: The Pentagon's Liturgical Travesty

On April 15, 2026, the Department of War hosted a religious service that will likely be remembered as one of the most significant instances of state-sponsored sacrilege in American history. As the nation grappled with escalating global tensions, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth stood before an assembly of military personnel and high-ranking officials to deliver a closing prayer. The expectation was a traditional invocation of divine guidance and protection. Instead, the assembly witnessed the official adoption of a cinematic fiction into the military liturgy. Hegseth recited what he termed CSAR 25:17, a text that was presented with the gravity of ancient scripture but was, in reality, a meticulously altered version of a monologue from Quentin Tarantino's 1994 film, Pulp Fiction. This incident was not merely an error of attribution; it was a profound travesty that signaled a broader institutional effort to replace the moral requirements of traditional faith with a violent, self-serving warrior creed.

1.1 The Desecration of the Sacred Space

A religious service within the walls of the Pentagon is intended to provide a space for spiritual reflection that transcends the immediate political and tactical objectives of the state. It is a moment where the temporal power of the military is meant to acknowledge its submission to a higher moral authority. However, during the April 15 service, this hierarchy was inverted. By utilizing the chapel as a stage for a performance derived from the criminal underworld of Hollywood, the administration effectively desecrated the space. The act of reciting a screenplay as if it were the Word of God transformed the service from a legitimate act of worship into a theater of the hyper-real. In this setting, the sacred was not honored; it was utilized as a hollow aesthetic to lend unearned authority to a message of vengeance and tactical supremacy.

1.2 The Rhetorical Gutter: Scriptural Malpractice

The specific text recited by Hegseth represents a case study in scriptural malpractice. The original Ezekiel 25:17 is a brief and sobering declaration of divine retribution against the Philistines. The Tarantino version, famously delivered by a hitman before an execution, is a stylistic patchwork of biblical themes that the filmmaker himself admitted was written for dramatic effect rather than theological accuracy. By choosing this version, and then further stripping it of its remaining religious identity to insert military call signs like Sandy 1, the Department of War engaged in a blatant act of blasphemy. The "Lord" was displaced by a close air support asset, and the "path of the righteous man" was redefined as the tactical survival of an aviator. This linguistic shift reflects a theological void within the administration, where the specific, inconvenient demands of the Gospel are discarded in favor of a script that justifies the state's use of force without question.

1.3 The Shadow of the Global Conflict: Attacks on Pope Leo XIV

This liturgical gaffe cannot be separated from the concurrent rhetorical campaign launched by the administration against Pope Leo XIV. As the Pope has increasingly called for global peace and criticized the American military posture as a "delusion of omnipotence," the President and his surrogates have responded with a series of unprecedented slurs and attacks. By labeling the Holy Father as "weak" and a "political plant," the administration has signaled a total rejection of the moral authority traditionally held by the See of Rome. The Hegseth recitation serves as the "positive" side of this "negative" campaign: while the Pope is disparaged, a new, violent, and state-aligned "Christianity" is being manufactured. The "CSAR 25:17" incident was an attempt to provide the troops with a version of faith that rewards vengeance, whereas the Pope offers only the "weak" message of the Cross.

1.4 Thesis: The Emergence of State-Sponsored Pseudo-Faith

This paper argues that the events of April 15, 2026, represent a deliberate pivot toward a state-sponsored pseudo-faith. This "Warrior Ethos" is a form of idolatry that takes the outward signs of Christianity—the Bible, the chaplaincy, and the language of scripture—and fills them with the values of the entertainment-industrial complex and the tactical requirements of the Department of War. It is a faith that is fundamentally hyper-real, existing in the space between a movie screen and a battlefield, and it is designed to excommunicate any religious leader, including the Pope, who dares to suggest that the military's power is not absolute. Through an analysis of this scriptural replacement and the subsequent assault on ecclesial authority, we can begin to understand the depth of the spiritual and institutional crisis currently facing the nation. The following sections will deconstruct the layers of this travesty, from the cinematic origin of the "creed" to the existential threat it poses to the integrity of sacred tradition.

2. The Invention of 'CSAR 25:17': From Hollywood Script to State Creed

The creation of "CSAR 25:17" is a case study in the total collapse of religious literacy within the highest echelons of the Department of War. This text, presented by Secretary Pete Hegseth as a hallowed military invocation, is not the result of ancient tradition or theological reflection. Instead, it is a direct descendant of twentieth-century exploitation cinema, a third-generation copy of a fake scripture that has been systematically scrubbed of its few remaining religious elements to serve as a propaganda tool for the modern warrior. By tracing the journey of this text from the writing desk of Quentin Tarantino to the pulpit of the Pentagon, we can observe the precise mechanics of how a cinematic fiction is sacralized into a state-sponsored creed.

2.1 The Cinematic Source: Tarantino's Misappropriation

The foundation of the Hegseth prayer is the monologue delivered by the character Jules Winnfield in the 1994 film Pulp Fiction. It is vital to state clearly that this monologue was never a translation of the Bible. While it opens with an attribution to Ezekiel 25:17, only the final sentence bears any resemblance to the actual prophetic text found in the King James Version. Tarantino and co-writer Roger Avary largely lifted the prose from the opening text of a 1970s Japanese martial arts film starring Sonny Chiba. In that original context, the words were meant to highlight the "badness" of the protagonist. Tarantino adopted them for the same purpose—to provide a rhythmic, intimidating preamble to an act of cold-blooded murder. The text was designed as a parody of religious authority, meant to show how a criminal could use the "sound" of the Bible to justify nihilistic violence. That this specific script was chosen as a model for a Pentagon prayer is the first layer of the ongoing blasphemy.

2.2 The 'CSAR' Adaptation: Replacing God with Air Support

The transition from "Pulp Fiction" to "CSAR 25:17" involved a series of tactical substitutions that completed the text's journey into pure sacrilege. In the military version read by Hegseth, the "righteous man" of the movie (already a fictionalized concept) is replaced by the "downed aviator." The "charity and goodwill" mentioned in the film are exchanged for "camaraderie and duty." Most significantly, the identity of the sovereign power is shifted. In the biblical text, the speaker is the Lord God. In the Tarantino monologue, the speaker claims "my name is the Lord." In the Hegseth adaptation, the declaration is: "And you will know my call sign is Sandy 1 when I lay my vengeance upon thee." This is a literal substitution of a human pilot—specifically the A-10 mission commander—for the Almighty. By placing a military call sign in the position reserved for the Divine Name, the Department of War has effectively deified its own air assets, creating a theology where salvation comes not from Grace, but from 30mm cannon fire.

2.3 Ritualization of Fiction in the A-10 Community

During the April 15 service, Secretary Hegseth defended the use of the text by claiming it was a "custom prayer" used by the A-10 crews of the "Sandy 1" mission who recently operated in Iran. This highlights a dangerous trend where operational rituals, built on the consumption of popular media, are allowed to bypass the oversight of the military chaplaincy. Within these high-stress communities, the repetition of "cool" cinematic quotes can easily take on the weight of tradition. When a unit adopts a movie quote as their pre-mission "psalm," it creates a feedback loop where the identity of the soldier is molded by Hollywood tropes rather than the complex ethical demands of their actual faith traditions. The fact that the leadership of the Department of War would then present this "military lore" as a legitimate piece of Christian liturgy to the public is a betrayal of the very religious heritage they claim to protect.

2.4 The Blasphemy of Institutional Adoption

The travesty reached its peak when this "CSAR 25:17" was formally integrated into a Pentagon religious service. It is one thing for a group of pilots to share a private, if misguided, cultural reference; it is quite another for the Secretary of War to stand before a multi-faith assembly and demand they "pray with me" using a script written for a fictional hitman. This act of institutional adoption signals to the entire force that the state no longer feels bound by the integrity of scriptural sources. By treating the Bible as a flexible template that can be rewritten to include military call signs and tactical objectives, the administration has committed a fundamental act of blasphemy. They have reduced the sacred text to a "skin" for a state-sponsored cult of violence, where the only "righteousness" is found in the success of the mission and the only "vengeance" is that which is delivered by the Department of War.

3. The Theological Void: Deconstructing the Blasphemy of Tactical Adaptation

The recitation of CSAR 25:17 at the Pentagon represents more than a cultural misunderstanding; it is a profound theological void. By stripping the scriptural shell of its original meaning and filling it with military jargon, the administration has engaged in a form of "tactical adaptation" that is essentially blasphemous. In this framework, the transcendent nature of God is entirely removed, replaced by the finite and fallible machinery of the state. This section deconstructs the specific theological failures inherent in this adaptation, focusing on how the deification of military assets and the flattening of divine justice into kinetic violence constitutes a rejection of foundational religious truths.

3.1 The Displacement of the Divine Name

In any monotheistic tradition, the name of God is sacrosanct, representing a power and a presence that is wholly "other" from human institutions. The most jarring element of the Hegseth recitation is the direct substitution of the Divine Name with a military call sign. By stating, "And you will know my call sign is Sandy 1," the speaker does not merely request divine assistance; he identifies the military asset as the source of ultimate authority and deliverance. This is the definition of idolatry: taking a created thing—in this case, an A-10 Warthog aircraft and its pilot—and elevating it to the status of the Creator. This substitution suggests that in the eyes of the Department of War, there is no power higher than the military’s own technical and tactical capabilities. The "Lord" of the Bible is not just forgotten; He is replaced by a radio frequency.

3.2 The Flattening of Justice into Kinetic Retribution

In the actual Book of Ezekiel, and even in the fragmented traditions it inspired, "vengeance" is a complex theological concept tied to the restoration of a cosmic moral order. It is an act reserved for God because only God possesses the perfect justice required to execute it without descending into mere bloodlust. The CSAR 25:17 adaptation flattens this concept into "kinetic retribution." Here, vengeance is not a restorative act of divine justice but a retaliatory strike by an armed force. By using religious language to describe close air support, the administration attempts to grant a "holy" status to the use of lethal force. This avoids the necessary moral scrutiny of combat by suggesting that every missile launch is a fulfillment of a divine mandate. It removes the ethical friction required for the just use of power, replacing it with a self-sanctified cycle of violence.

3.3 The Absence of Grace in the Warrior Creed

The most glaring theological omission in the "warrior ethos" promoted by the Department of War is the total absence of grace. The Christian Gospel, which the administration often references for political optics, is centered on the concepts of mercy, forgiveness, and the love of enemies. The CSAR 25:17 text, however, is a monologue of pure, unadulterated wrath. There is no room for the "peace that passes understanding" or the command to "turn the other cheek." By choosing a text that emphasizes "striking down" and "furious anger," and then ritualizing it in a religious service, the state is effectively excommunicating the core tenets of the faith it claims to uphold. This creates a "theology of the sword" that is fundamentally incompatible with the teachings of the historical Church and the contemporary appeals for peace made by Pope Leo XIV.

3.4 Sacralizing the Instrument of War

The act of tactical adaptation serves to sacralize the instruments of war themselves. When a prayer is centered on the "path of the downed aviator" and the "vengeance" of a call sign, the technology of the military becomes a liturgical object. The aircraft, the weapons systems, and the tactical protocols are no longer seen as mere tools of national defense; they are treated as icons of a state religion. This sacralization is dangerous because it makes the military apparatus beyond reproach. If the A-10 is the "Lord" in the moment of the strike, then the strike itself cannot be questioned. This theological vacuum allows the state to bypass international law and traditional just-war theory by appealing to a higher, albeit manufactured, "divine" authority. The result is a religious landscape where the Department of War is both the priest and the deity, and the only "sin" is a tactical failure.

3.5 The Rejection of Prophetic Accountability

Traditionally, the role of religion in the context of the state is to provide a prophetic voice that holds power to account. The prophet reminds the king that he is not God and that his power is subject to moral judgment. The Hegseth incident represents the total silencing of this voice. By creating their own scripture, the administration has ensured that there is no external moral standard by which they can be measured. They have built a theological echo chamber where the only "Word" they hear is the one they wrote themselves. This rejection of prophetic accountability is what makes the CSAR 25:17 incident a travesty; it is a deliberate attempt to insulate state violence from the demands of mercy and the critiques of religious leaders like Pope Leo XIV, who represent a tradition that refuses to be co-opted by the ambitions of any single nation.

4. Pulp Fiction as Pseudo-Scripture: The Power of Cinematic Myth

The cultural elevation of a three-decade-old film monologue to the status of a foundational military creed is a testament to the overwhelming power of cinematic myth in the postmodern age. For a vast segment of the American public, and evidently for the leadership of the Department of War, the screenplay of Pulp Fiction has achieved a level of canonical stability that the actual Bible no longer possesses. This section explores how the cinematic medium functions as a primary source of pseudo-scripture, creating a shared moral and aesthetic vocabulary that is more influential than traditional theology. The use of the Tarantino monologue at the Pentagon is the ultimate expression of this shift, where the "cool" and "authoritative" aesthetic of a fictional hitman is used to mask the spiritual void of a state-sponsored cult of violence.

4.1 The Aesthetic of Authority in the Secular Age

In a society where traditional religious literacy is in steep decline, the "sound" of authority has been decoupled from the "truth" of the source. Tarantino’s Ezekiel monologue is a masterpiece of stylized prose that mimics the cadence of the King James Bible without the burden of its actual content. For the average listener, the rhythmic repetition of "the path of the righteous man" and the "valley of darkness" triggers a pavlovian response of reverence. This is the aesthetic of authority: a linguistic performance that feels holy because it sounds old and serious. By adopting this cinematic script, the Department of War is not engaging with God; it is engaging with a memory of how God is supposed to sound on screen. This pseudo-scripture provides the emotional payoff of a religious experience without requiring any of the moral accountability or historical grounding that a real faith tradition would demand.

4.2 The Hitman as a Misplaced Prophet

The supreme irony of the Hegseth incident lies in the character of Jules Winnfield, the original "prophet" of the Pulp Fiction monologue. Within the context of the film, Jules is a professional murderer who uses the pseudo-verse as a "cold-blooded thing to say" to terrorize his victims. Tarantino intentionally framed this as a perversion of religion—a character utilizing the trappings of faith to justify a life of sin and violence. By the end of the film, Jules experiences a crisis of conscience and admits that he has been the "tyranny of evil men" all along. When the Secretary of War recites this same text at the Pentagon, he ignores the film's own cautionary arc. He takes the hitman's lethal rhetoric and presents it as a virtuous military ideal. This is a profound travesty: the administration has taken a cinematic warning about the abuse of religious language and turned it into the very thing it was warning against. They have adopted the hitman's mask but discarded his repentance.

4.3 The Sanitization of Violence through Cinematic Tropes

Cinematic myth serves as a powerful tool for the sanitization of real-world violence. By framing the operations of the Department of War through the lens of a "warrior creed" like CSAR 25:17, the state transforms the messy, tragic reality of combat into a scripted heroic narrative. In this cinematic theology, the soldier is not a human being engaged in the complex and often morally taxing work of national defense; they are the "righteous man" or the "shepherd" from a blockbuster movie. This framing allows the administration to bypass the ethical challenges posed by leaders like Pope Leo XIV, who remind us of the human cost of war. If the conflict can be presented as a scene from a movie, with clearly defined heroes and villains and a rhythmic soundtrack of vengeance, then the moral weight of the "kinetic effects" is lifted. The pseudo-scripture of Pulp Fiction provides a moral shield that actual scripture—with its commands to love one's enemies—would never allow.

4.4 The Failure of the Canon: Why Reality Cannot Compete

The reason the "real" Ezekiel 25:17 was rejected in favor of the Tarantino version is that the real Bible is inherently inconvenient for the state. The actual prophetic verse is a short, grim statement of divine anger that offers no narrative of a heroic "shepherd" or a "righteous man." It does not flatter the ego of the military commander or the pilot. The cinematic version, however, is designed to be epic. It provides a roles for the "good guys" and a clear mandate for "great vengeance." In the competition for the American imagination, the simulation of scripture is winning because it is optimized for consumption and institutional branding. The canon of the Bible has been replaced by the canon of the Blockbuster. This represents a total surrender of the sacred to the commercial, where the Department of War would rather be "cool" and "cinematic" than truthful and holy.

4.5 The Blasphemous Intersection of Hollywood and the Holy

Ultimately, the power of cinematic myth creates a space where blasphemy can be normalized as "culture." When the lines between a Tarantino script and a Pentagon prayer are blurred, the very concept of the "sacred" is destroyed. The "CSAR 25:17" incident shows that for this administration, there is no difference between a divine revelation and a screenwriter's flourish. This is a travesty of the highest order, as it reduces the Word of God to a marketing tool for military recruitment and political signaling. By prioritizing the "myth" of the warrior hitman over the reality of the Gospel, the state has committed a fundamental act of sacrilege. They have built a religion out of light and shadow on a movie screen, and in doing so, they have ensured that the voices of actual religious authority—like that of Pope Leo XIV—are drowned out by the thunderous, fictional "vengeance" of a cinematic god.

5. The Assault on the See: Pope Leo XIV and the Rejection of Global Peace

The liturgical performance of CSAR 25:17 at the Pentagon cannot be viewed in isolation from the administration's broader offensive against traditional religious authority, specifically the unprecedented campaign of vitriol directed at Pope Leo XIV. As the first American-born pontiff, Leo XIV—formerly Cardinal Robert Prevost of Chicago—was initially seen by some in the United States as a potential ally for American interests. However, his papacy has instead been defined by a rigorous adherence to the Gospel’s mandate for peace, leading to a direct and public confrontation with the Department of War. The administration’s response to the Pope’s calls for de-escalation in Iran has not been a theological dialogue, but a series of personalized slurs and a deliberate attempt to decouple the American Catholic identity from the See of Rome. This section examines how the "warrior ethos" is being used as a rhetorical weapon to marginalize the successor of Peter and replace his message of global peace with a nationalistic pseudo-faith.

5.1 The American Pope and the Conflict of Sovereignty

The election of Robert Prevost as Pope Leo XIV in 2025 was a historic moment that many expected would harmonize American political power with Catholic moral influence. Instead, it has highlighted an irreconcilable conflict of sovereignty. Leo XIV has consistently refused to allow his American heritage to be leveraged for nationalistic ends, choosing instead to emphasize the universal nature of the Church's mission. When the Pope described the United States' military posture in Iran as a "delusion of omnipotence" in early April 2026, he was exercising a form of moral sovereignty that the current administration finds intolerable. The Pentagon’s subsequent use of the Pulp Fiction-derived "creed" was a symbolic counter-strike, asserting that the "Sandy 1" aviator holds a more relevant authority for American soldiers than

the Vicar of Christ. This conflict is a modern enactment of the ancient tension between the state's desire for total loyalty and the Church's allegiance to a Kingdom not of this world.

5.2 Deconstructing the Slurs: 'Weakness' as a Theological Virtue

The rhetorical strategy employed by the President and his surrogates against Pope Leo XIV has relied heavily on the inversion of Christian virtues. Following the Pope's prayer vigil for peace on April 11, the administration unleashed a barrage of insults, the most prominent of which was the label of "weak." On Truth Social, the President characterized the Pope as "weak on crime" and "terrible for foreign policy," attempting to frame the leader of the world's 1.4 billion Catholics as if he were a local political opponent or a soft-on-crime prosecutor. This line of attack is fundamentally a rejection of the "weakness" of the Cross—the central Christian mystery that God's power is made perfect in vulnerability. By disparaging the Pope's calls for mercy and dialogue as "weakness," the administration is effectively calling the Gospel itself obsolete. They are replacing the "weak" savior of the New Testament with a "strong" warrior god whose primary attributes are vengeance and kinetic power.

5.3 The Nuclear Falsehood and the Erasure of Moral Dialogue

Perhaps the most dangerous element of the assault on the See is the use of deliberate falsehoods to close off the possibility of moral dialogue. In mid-April 2026, the President claimed that Pope Leo XIV "thinks it is OK for Iran to have a nuclear weapon," a statement that stands in direct opposition to the Pope's well-documented advocacy for total global nuclear disarmament. This "nuclear falsehood" serves a specific purpose: it transforms a moral disagreement into a matter of national security, thereby justifying the dismissal of the Pope's concerns as "dangerous." When the Department of War adopts a "vengeance" creed while simultaneously accusing the Pope of supporting nuclear proliferation, they are creating a closed narrative environment where the state is the only reliable guardian of the "good." This erasure of honest dialogue ensures that the ethical critiques of the Church are never actually engaged; they are simply branded as treasonous.

5.4 Excommunicating the Vicar: The Rise of Nationalistic Pseudo-Catholicism

The administration's attacks on Pope Leo XIV represent a localized "excommunication" of the Pope from the American civil religious landscape. By claiming that Leo XIV was a "political plant" and a "globalist" who is out of touch with "real Americans," the state is encouraging a form of nationalistic pseudo-Catholicism. This version of the faith replaces the global hierarchy of the Church with a domestic hierarchy of "patriotic" believers who view the Secretary of War as a more legitimate spiritual guide than the Bishop of Rome. The use of AI-generated religious imagery—depicting the President as a Christ-like figure or a modern-day Moses—is a key tool in this process. It provides a visual and emotional substitute for the traditional iconography of the

Church, reinforcing the idea that the "true" sacred authority is located in Washington, not the Vatican. In this framework, the Pope is not a spiritual father; he is a foreign agent of a liberal world order.

5.5 The Secretary of War vs. The Successor of Peter

The contrast between Secretary Pete Hegseth's recitation of "CSAR 25:17" and Pope Leo XIV's addresses on peace provides a stark choice between two competing visions of humanity. Hegseth's "Sandy 1" theology is exclusive, tribal, and focused on the destruction of the "other." It is a religion of the cockpit and the drone station, where the "lost children" are only those who wear the American uniform. In contrast, Leo XIV's message is universal, emphasizing the shared dignity of all human beings, including those who are targeted by American "vengeance." The Secretary of War represents the deification of the state's will to power, while the Successor of Peter represents the enduring call to follow a Prince of Peace who refused the sword. By choosing a movie script over the Gospel, the Pentagon has made its choice clear: it prefers the "furious anger" of a cinematic hitman to the "unacceptable" peace offered by the Vicar of Christ. This is the ultimate travesty—not just a misquoted verse, but a total rejection of the moral foundations of Western civilization in favor of a hyper-real cult of war.

6. Vengeance as Virtue: The Displacement of the Gospel of Mercy

The elevation of the CSAR 25:17 monologue to a state-sponsored liturgy marks a decisive pivot in the American civil religion, shifting its foundation from a posture of protective justice to a cult of sanctified vengeance. In traditional Christian theology, mercy is not a sign of weakness but the highest expression of divine strength, a principle that serves as a necessary check on human impulses toward retribution. However, the Department of War's adoption of the Tarantino script explicitly discards this moral constraint. By framing vengeance as the primary virtue of the warrior, the administration has effectively displaced the Gospel of mercy with a pagan ethos of blood-debt and retaliation. This section analyzes the theological consequences of this shift, examining how the rhetoric of furious anger is used to justify state actions that traditional faith would condemn as morally unacceptable.

6.1 The Theological Inversion of Retribution

In the actual biblical tradition, the execution of vengeance is a divine prerogative precisely because human beings are incapable of achieving perfectly balanced justice. The scriptural warning that vengeance belongs to the Lord is a safeguard against the endless cycles of escalation that characterize human conflict. The CSAR 25:17 adaptation performs a total theological inversion of this principle. By identifying the military pilot as the executor of vengeance, the state claims a divine status for its own kinetic operations. This inversion removes

the moral buffer of mercy, suggesting that the only righteous response to an adversary is their total destruction. In this framework, the capacity for violence is no longer a tragic necessity but a holy obligation, transforming the soldier into a minister of wrath rather than a guardian of peace.

6.2 Vengeance as a State Rite

The formal recitation of a vengeance-themed "creed" at the Pentagon transforms the act of war into a religious rite. When Secretary Hegseth leads a prayer that culminates in the promise of striking down enemies with great vengeance and furious anger, he is not merely describing a tactical operation; he is sacralizing the state's will to power. This ritualization is a travesty of the liturgical tradition, which is meant to orient the believer toward humility and reconciliation. Instead, the CSAR 25:17 rite orients the force toward a state of perpetual readiness for retribution. It creates a psychological environment where the "warrior" is defined by their ability to inflict suffering on those who oppose the state. By making vengeance the climax of the military service, the administration has placed the machine of war at the center of the altar, displacing the God of mercy with the idol of the strike.

6.3 The Rejection of the Beatitudes in the Warrior Creed

The "warrior ethos" as performed in the Pentagon prayer is a direct repudiation of the Beatitudes, the core ethical teachings of the New Testament. Where the Gospel blesses the peacemakers and the merciful, the CSAR 25:17 creed blesses the one who "strikes down" and "destroys." This is not a subtle shift; it is a total replacement of one moral system with another. The administration's preference for the Tarantino monologue over the Sermon on the Mount reveals a deep-seated contempt for the values of traditional Christianity. To this state-sponsored pseudo-faith, the concept of loving one's enemies is seen as an institutional liability. By enshrining a movie script as its holy text, the Department of War has declared that the message of Christ is incompatible with the requirements of the modern state. This rejection is what makes the incident truly blasphemous: it uses the appearance of faith to preach the exact opposite of what the faith demands.

6.4 Contrast: The Papal Call for De-escalation

This displacement of mercy is most visible when contrasted with the urgent appeals of Pope Leo XIV. As the Pope has consistently reminded the world that "war is always a defeat for humanity," the American administration has responded by doubling down on the rhetoric of vengeance. Leo XIV's recent denunciation of the "delusion of omnipotence" serves as a prophetic critique of the very mindset that produced the CSAR 25:17 prayer. While the Pope calls for de-escalation and the protection of civilians, the Department of War broadcasts a message of "furious anger." The slurs directed at the Pope—labeling him as weak or a political adversary—are a direct result

of this ideological conflict. The administration cannot tolerate a message of mercy because it exposes the hollowness of their vengeance-based creed. The Pope represents a tradition that refuses to let the state claim a monopoly on the sacred, making him the ultimate target for an administration that seeks to rule without moral restraint.

6.5 The Moral Consequences of Sanctified Revenge

The ultimate consequence of elevating vengeance to a virtue is the total erosion of moral accountability in warfare. When a nation's military creed is built on the promise of striking down brothers with "great vengeance," the humanity of the adversary is entirely erased. This language justifies the suspension of international law and the abandonment of just-war constraints, as any act can be defended as a "righteous" response to an original transgression. The CSAR 25:17 incident signals to the world that the United States is no longer interested in the "weak" constraints of mercy or the universal dignity of the human person. It has instead embraced a hyper-real theology where the only truth is the call sign of the pilot and the only justice is the fury of the strike. By displacing the Gospel of mercy, the state has opened the door to a level of unrestrained violence that is fundamentally at odds with the sacred tradition it purports to honor.

7. The Warrior Ethos vs. The Imitation of Christ

The central ideological conflict of the modern American state is no longer a simple division between the secular and the religious, but rather a clash between two irreconcilable visions of the sacred. On one side stands the warrior ethos, an institutionalized code of conduct that sacralizes military strength, tribal loyalty, and the capacity for decisive violence. On the other stands the imitation of Christ, the traditional Christian call to follow the example of Jesus through humility, sacrifice, and the love of enemies. The recitation of the CSAR 25:17 creed at the Pentagon serves as the ultimate declaration of the warrior ethos's triumph over the Gospel. By choosing a script that celebrates the strike over the sacrifice, the Department of War has effectively abandoned the foundational moral philosophy of Western Christendom in favor of a modern, cinematic paganism.

7.1 Defining the Warrior Ethos as a Secular Religion

The warrior ethos is often presented by the Department of War as a set of professional standards, yet in practice, it functions as a comprehensive secular religion. It provides a moral framework, a sense of belonging, and a set of rituals—such as the CSAR 25:17 service—that offer meaning to the act of killing and the risk of being killed. Unlike the imitation of Christ, which is rooted in the recognition of human fallibility and the need for divine grace, the warrior ethos is rooted in the perfection of the self as a tactical asset. The "good" is defined by mission

success, and "evil" is defined as anything that hinders the lethality of the force. When Secretary Hegseth adapted the Pulp Fiction monologue, he was not looking for a spiritual guide; he was looking for a psychological anchor that could transform the moral weight of combat into a heroic narrative of righteous vengeance.

7.2 The Imitatio Christi and the Scandal of Humility

The imitation of Christ, or Imitatio Christi, is a spiritual tradition that emphasizes the interior life and the cultivation of virtues that are often seen as antithetical to military power: poverty of spirit, meekness, and the willingness to suffer injustice rather than inflict it. This tradition, exemplified today by the teachings of Pope Leo XIV, is a scandal to the proponents of the warrior ethos. To an administration that values "strength" above all else, the command to turn the other cheek is viewed as a dangerous form of institutional weakness. The attacks on the Pope as being "weak on crime" or "terrible for foreign policy" are a direct rejection of the Christian belief that the greatest power is found in the cross, not the sword. By replacing the biblical Ezekiel with a cinematic hitman, the Pentagon has signaled its refusal to participate in the "weakness" of the imitation of Christ.

7.3 Strength vs. Power: A Theological Distinction

A fundamental misunderstanding at the heart of the CSAR 25:17 incident is the conflation of worldly power with spiritual strength. In the warrior ethos, power is measured by the ability to "strike down" and "destroy," as the adapted verse promises. In contrast, the imitation of Christ suggests that true strength is the ability to restrain one's power in service of a higher moral law. The "Sandy 1" theology is one of absolute power—the ability of an aircraft to deliver vengeance from the sky. This is a theology of the predator. The Pope, by contrast, represents a theology of the shepherd who is willing to lay down his life for the sheep. The administration’s preference for the former reveals a shift from a nation that seeks to be "under God" to a nation that seeks to be "like God," possessing the ultimate power over life and death without the inconvenient requirement of divine mercy.

7.4 The Warrior as the New Savior

By deifying tactical roles and call signs, the warrior ethos positions the soldier as the new savior of the state. In the Hegseth recitation, the "downed aviator" is the one who is shepherded, and the "Sandy 1" pilot is the one who delivers them from the "tyranny of evil men." This narrative structure replaces the traditional role of Christ as the redeemer with the military rescue apparatus. This is the ultimate expression of political idolatry: the belief that our salvation is secured not by a transcendent act of love, but by a precise act of violence. The imitation of Christ requires the believer to find their identity in a crucified savior, a prospect that the modern Department of War find's incompatible with the "toughness" required for global

dominance. Thus, they have created a new savior in the image of the cinematic warrior, one who is never "weak" and who never refuses the path of vengeance.

7.5 The Incompatibility of the Two Creeds

The attempt to harmonize the warrior ethos with the imitation of Christ is a fundamental impossibility that results only in the corruption of the latter. One cannot simultaneously follow the Prince of Peace and the God of Vengeance. The CSAR 25:17 incident at the Pentagon was the moment the mask fell, revealing that the state is no longer interested in the pretense of following Christ. It has chosen its own creed, one written by screenwriters and performed by politicians, that values the "furious anger" of the strike over the "quiet mercy" of the gospel. This is the travesty that Pope Leo XIV has identified: the attempt to use the name of God to bless the rejection of God's commands. As long as the Department of War continues to promote a "warrior ethos" that finds its scripture in Pulp Fiction, it will remain in direct opposition to the sacred tradition it purports to defend.

8. Institutional Failure: The Crisis of the Military Chaplaincy

The presence of Pete Hegseth at a Pentagon pulpit reciting a modified screenplay from an R-rated film is not merely a personal failure of the Secretary of War; it represents a systemic and institutional collapse of the United States military chaplaincy. The chaplaincy is historically tasked with the solemn responsibility of guarding the spiritual and moral integrity of the armed forces, ensuring that religious services remain grounded in authentic tradition and provide a check against the deification of state power. However, the events of April 15, 2026, reveal a chaplaincy that has been effectively neutered, either through ideological capture or professional cowardice. By allowing a cinematic fiction to be presented as holy writ, the institutional religious leadership of the Department of War has signaled its total surrender to the "warrior ethos," choosing to serve as a decorative auxiliary to the machinery of violence rather than as a prophetic voice of faith.

8.1 The Erosion of Theological Oversight

The primary function of the Chaplain Corps is to ensure that the "free exercise" of religion within the military is conducted with dignity and theological accuracy. This requires a rigorous vetting of the materials and rhetoric used in official services. The fact that "CSAR 25:17" was allowed to proceed to the podium suggests that these oversight mechanisms have been dismantled. This erosion of oversight is likely the result of a multi-year effort to prioritize "inclusivity" and "mission alignment" over scriptural truth. When the "creed" of a unit is allowed to override the established canons of faith, the chaplaincy ceases to be a guardian of the sacred and becomes a facilitator of unit lore. The failure to identify and intercept a Tarantino

monologue before it reached a high-level Pentagon service is a damning indictment of the intellectual and theological rigor currently found within the halls of the Department of War's religious leadership.

8.2 From Pastors to Propagandists: The Lethality Mandate

In recent years, the military chaplaincy has been increasingly pressured to justify its existence through its contribution to "lethality" and "readiness." This shift has fundamentally altered the role of the chaplain, transforming them from a pastor who cares for the soul into a psychological technician who optimizes the "spiritual fitness" of the warrior. In this "lethality mandate," the specific content of a religion matters less than its ability to produce a more effective soldier. If a Pulp Fiction monologue makes a pilot feel more "righteous" or "vengeful" before a strike, the modern chaplaincy is incentivized to accept it. This utilitarian approach to faith is a travesty of the office. It treats the sacred as a performance-enhancing drug, stripping away the moral and ethical restraints of traditional religion in favor of whatever rhetoric best serves the immediate tactical needs of the state.

8.3 The Silence of the Shepherds: Complicity in Sacrilege

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the Hegseth incident was the silence of the chaplains in attendance. There were no public protests from the Chief of Chaplains, no resignations in response to the blasphemy, and no institutional statements affirming the integrity of the Book of Ezekiel. This silence constitutes a form of complicity in sacrilege. When the Secretary of War replaces the name of the Lord with a call sign, he is committing a theological assault on the very foundations of the chaplains' ordination vows. The failure of these religious officers to speak truth to power reveals a chaplaincy that is more afraid of administrative discipline than of divine judgment. By remaining silent while the Gospel of mercy was displaced by a script of "furious anger," the military's religious leaders have abandoned their flock to a hyper-real cult of violence.

8.4 The Conflict of Interest: State Loyalty vs. Divine Allegiance

The military chaplaincy has always existed in a state of tension between its loyalty to the United States government and its allegiance to God. The Hegseth recitation and the administration's attacks on Pope Leo XIV have brought this conflict to a breaking point. For Catholic chaplains in particular, the situation is untenable: they are serving an administration that publicly disparages the Holy Father as "weak" and a "political plant," while simultaneously using a cinematic hitman's "creed" to bless military operations. When forced to choose between the "warrior ethos" of the Department of War and the "gospel of peace" defended by the Pope, the institutional response of the chaplaincy has been to retreat into a safe, bureaucratized

neutrality. This neutrality, however, is an illusion. In the face of blasphemy, to be neutral is to be a partisan for the state.

8.5 The Desacralization of the Office

The ultimate result of this institutional failure is the total desacralization of the military chaplaincy. If the "Word of God" is interchangeable with a "Tarantino script," then the office of the chaplain no longer carries any unique moral authority. The chaplain becomes merely another administrative officer, specialized in the "religious-themed" branding of military power. This loss of the sacred is a catastrophe for the soldier, who is left without a genuine source of moral guidance in the face of the horrors of war. Without a chaplaincy that is willing to defend the integrity of scripture and the universal dignity of the human person—even against its own leadership—the military becomes a purely mechanical force, guided only by its own vengeance and its own fictional myths. The crisis of the chaplaincy is the crisis of the soul of the Department of War, and the April 15 service was the funeral of its moral independence.

9. Media Saturation and the Death of Scriptural Literacy

The elevation of a cinematic monologue to the status of a state-sanctioned prayer is the inevitable result of a society drowning in media saturation and suffering from a terminal decline in scriptural literacy. In the contemporary American landscape, the primary source of moral and metaphysical vocabulary is no longer the pulpit or the primary text, but the screen. For a generation raised on the hyper-kinetic imagery of Hollywood and the curated aesthetics of social media, the distinction between a divine revelation and a screenwriter’s flourish has become functionally nonexistent. The Hegseth incident at the Pentagon is the ultimate symptom of this "scriptural amnesia," where the deep, challenging, and often inconvenient truths of the biblical canon are replaced by the "fast-food" theology of pop culture. This section explores how the constant consumption of media has hollowed out the religious imagination, leaving behind a vacuum that the state is eager to fill with its own violent myths.

9.1 The Precession of the Image over the Text

We live in an era where the image has achieved total precedence over the text. For the vast majority of the public, and clearly for the leadership of the Department of War, the "experience" of a story is more real than the source material from which it claims to be derived. When Secretary Hegseth stood at the podium, he was not engaging with the historical or theological complexities of the Book of Ezekiel. He was engaging with a cinematic memory. To the media-saturated mind, the performance of Samuel L. Jackson as a "righteous" executioner carries more weight than the actual words of the prophet. This is the death of literacy: the inability to see past the stylized performance to the lack of substance beneath. In this

environment, the "truth" of a scripture is determined by its "vibe"—its ability to trigger a specific emotional response—rather than its historical or spiritual authenticity.

9.2 Scriptural Amnesia and the Rise of the 'Cinema-Catechized'

The American public is increasingly "cinema-catechized," meaning their understanding of religious concepts is filtered through the lens of popular entertainment. Concepts such as vengeance, sacrifice, and redemption are no longer taught through the rigorous study of sacred tradition, but are absorbed through the tropes of action movies and superhero franchises. This leads to a state of scriptural amnesia where people believe they know the Bible because they have seen its "echoes" on screen. The "CSAR 25:17" gaffe was possible only because the administration assumed the audience was just as biblically illiterate as they were. They gambled on the fact that the "sound" of the Pulp Fiction monologue would be enough to pass for the "sound" of God. This is a travesty of education and faith, where a fictional hitman's catchphrase becomes the new "Lord's Prayer" for a nation that has forgotten how to read its own holy books.

9.3 The Sound of Sanctity: Rhythmic Persuasion and the Loss of Meaning

One of the primary tools of media saturation is the use of rhythmic persuasion—the ability of a specific cadence or tone to bypass critical thinking and evoke a sense of authority. Tarantino's pseudo-scripture is designed specifically for this purpose; it utilizes the "King James" rhythm to create a feeling of ancient gravity. When this is amplified by the institutional power of the Pentagon, it becomes a form of psychological conditioning. The meaning of the words—the fact that they are advocating for "furious anger" and "striking down" brothers—is lost in the "sound of sanctity." This allows the state to smuggle in a violent warrior ethos under the cover of religious ritual. The death of literacy means that we have become a people who are moved by the music of the message but are entirely deaf to the lyrics, especially when those lyrics are blasphemous.

9.4 Algorithmic Faith: AI, Memetics, and the Displacement of Tradition

The problem of media saturation is compounded by the rise of algorithmic faith, where AI-generated images and memetic content are used to manufacture religious conviction. The administration's use of AI to depict the President in Christ-like poses is a direct assault on traditional religious iconography. These images are designed to go viral, bypassing the slow, contemplative nature of traditional faith in favor of the immediate, emotional hit of a digital image. This digital environment creates a feedback loop where the "warrior ethos" is constantly reinforced by memes, while the nuanced and difficult calls for peace from leaders like Pope Leo XIV are buried by the algorithm. The "CSAR 25:17" incident was the physical manifestation of a

meme: a piece of "cool" content that has been stripped of its context and weaponized for institutional gain.

9.5 The Dangers of a Faith Without a Canon

The ultimate danger of the death of scriptural literacy is the emergence of a faith without a canon—a religion that has no fixed, authoritative text to ground its claims. When the Bible is interchangeable with a movie script, the "sacred" becomes whatever the person in power says it is. This is the goal of the state-sponsored pseudo-faith: to eliminate any external moral standard that could hold the military or the government to account. Without a canon, there is no way to challenge the "Sandy 1" theology, because there is no longer a "Word of God" to point to as a contradiction. The Hegseth incident shows that the Department of War is building a new canon out of the scraps of Hollywood, creating a "religion" that is perfectly aligned with its tactical goals and perfectly insulated from the demands of mercy. This is the terminal stage of media saturation: a world where the only "scripture" left is the one we see on the screen, and the only "god" left is the one who delivers the most vengeance.

10. The Hyper-Real Savior: When 'Sandy 1' Replaces the Lord

The most spiritually transgressive moment of the Pentagon service occurred when the identity of the divine was explicitly overwritten by a military call sign. By concluding the prayer with the declaration, "And you will know my call sign is Sandy 1 when I lay my vengeance upon thee," the Department of War completed a process of radical substitution. In this hyper-real liturgy, the "Lord" of the biblical Ezekiel—and even the "Lord" of the fictional Jules Winnfield—is no longer the protagonist of the story. The savior is instead a tactical asset, specifically the A-10 mission commander responsible for coordinating the kinetic violence of a rescue operation. This replacement is the ultimate expression of a state religion that has discarded the transcendent in favor of the technical. It suggests that for the modern "warrior," the presence of a close air support aircraft is a more reliable and relevant source of deliverance than the presence of the Almighty.

10.1 The Deification of the Tactical Asset

The use of "Sandy 1" as a substitute for the Divine Name is not merely a linguistic flourish; it is a literal act of deification. In the context of Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR), "Sandy" is the historic call sign for the pilots who protect downed personnel and orchestrate their recovery. By placing this call sign in the slot reserved for the name of God, the prayer asserts that the pilot possesses the attributes of the divine: the power to save, the authority to judge, and the mandate to execute vengeance. This is a theology of the machine, where the aircraft and its operator are worshipped as the primary agents of salvation. In the hyper-real environment of

the Pentagon service, the "Sandy 1" pilot is elevated above the level of a human soldier and becomes an icon of the state's absolute power. This deification removes the moral friction inherent in the use of force, as the pilot's actions are framed not as human decisions subject to error, but as the inevitable "vengeance" of a mechanical god.

10.2 The Simulation of Salvation: The 'Sandy 1' vs. The Savior

This tactical substitution creates a simulation of salvation that is fundamentally at odds with the Christian understanding of the Savior. While the historical Christ is defined by his sacrifice, his humility, and his rejection of the sword, the "Sandy 1" savior is defined by his lethality, his superiority, and his "furious anger." This is a hyper-real savior for a hyper-real age—a figure who offers protection only to those within the tribe and promises destruction to all others. By choosing to worship the call sign over the Christ, the administration is providing the troops with a version of faith that requires no repentance and offers no mercy. It is a faith where the only "sin" is being shot down and the only "salvation" is a successful extraction. This simulation is preferred by the state because it is controllable, predictable, and perfectly aligned with the objectives of the Department of War, unlike the "unpredictable" and "weak" message of the actual Gospel.

10.3 The 'Delusion of Omnipotence' and the Mechanical God

The deification of "Sandy 1" is the precise "delusion of omnipotence" that Pope Leo XIV denounced during his April 11 peace vigil. When the Pope warned that even the "holy Name of God" was being dragged into "discourses of death," he was anticipating the exact sacrilege performed by Hegseth. The "Sandy 1" theology is built on the belief that American military technology can achieve a state of omnipotence—the ability to project power anywhere and retrieve anyone through sheer force of will. This mechanical god does not listen to prayers for peace; it only responds to the coordinates of the target. By replacing the Lord with a call sign, the administration has institutionalized the very idolatry the Pope identified. They have traded a God who commands us to love our enemies for a "savior" who promises to "strike down" anyone who threatens the "brotherhood" of the state.

10.4 Vengeance as a Technical Requirement

In the "CSAR 25:17" creed, vengeance is no longer a moral category but a technical requirement. The "great vengeance and furious anger" are presented as the necessary kinetic effects of the Sandy 1 mission. This strips the concept of retribution of its remaining ethical gravity. If vengeance is just part of the "Sandy" protocol, then it is beyond the reach of moral critique. This reflects a broader trend in the Department of War where lethal actions are sanitized through the language of "effects-based operations" and "tactical necessity." By wrapping these technical requirements in the aesthetic of a Bible verse, the administration

attempts to give them a "holy" weight they do not possess. The "Lord" of the Bible is a judge who demands justice; the "Sandy 1" of the Pentagon is a weapon that delivers fire. The travesty lies in the fact that the state wants the moral prestige of the former while only being interested in the destructive power of the latter.

10.5 The Erasure of the Transcendent in State Ritual

The ultimate consequence of replacing the Lord with "Sandy 1" is the total erasure of the transcendent from state ritual. When the highest authority cited in a religious service is a military call sign, the service is no longer religious in any traditional sense; it is a ceremony of state-worship. There is no longer a "higher power" to which the Secretary of War or the President is accountable. The state has become its own god, and the "warrior" has become its own savior. The Hegseth recitation marks the moment where the American civil religion finally shed its dependence on the Judeo-Christian tradition and fully embraced the hyper-real theology of the screen and the battlefield. In this new religion, there is no "Valley of Darkness" that cannot be cleared by an A-10, and there is no "Lord" whose name is more powerful than the call sign of the commander. This is the blasphemous heart of the "CSAR 25:17" incident: the declaration that the military's power is the only sacred thing left.

11. Political Idolatry and the Sacralization of Violence

The CSAR 25:17 incident and the surrounding attacks on Pope Leo XIV are not merely symptoms of cultural confusion; they represent a coordinated effort to establish a form of political idolatry within the United States military and executive branches. In this framework, the state does not merely seek the blessing of the divine; it seeks to subsume the divine. When the Secretary of War utilizes a pulpit to replace the name of God with a military call sign, and the President utilizes digital media to project himself as a messianic figure, the result is the sacralization of violence. This section explores how religious aesthetics are being weaponized to grant the Department of War absolute moral autonomy, effectively creating a state religion that views any external spiritual authority—most notably the papacy—as a threat to national security.

11.1 The Pharisee Protocol: Weaponizing Scripture against the Press

A critical component of this political idolatry is the redirection of biblical condemnation away from the state and toward its critics. Following the backlash to the April 15 service, Secretary Hegseth defended his actions by comparing members of the press to the Pharisees of the New Testament. By framing journalistic inquiry as a "hardened heart" calibrated only to impugn, Hegseth utilized a sacred archetype of religious hypocrisy to shield himself from accountability. This "Pharisee Protocol" is a hallmarks of political idolatry: it claims the mantle of the "persecuted righteous" for the wielders of state power while casting those who demand

transparency as enemies of the faith. In this inverted theology, the "goodness" of the Department of War's actions is assumed to be self-evident, and any questioning of the "CSAR 25:17" recitation is treated not as a factual correction, but as a spiritual failing.

11.2 The Golden Calf of Kinetic Power: Sandy 1 as the New Deity

The substitution of the Lord with the call sign Sandy 1 represents the definitive act of state-sponsored idolatry. This is not a metaphor but a literal displacement of the transcendent with the technical. By sacralizing the lead mission planner and the A-10 aircraft, the administration has constructed a mechanical "Golden Calf" designed to be worshipped in the moment of tactical crisis. The "vengeance" promised in the adapted verse is no longer a cosmic balancing of justice, but the kinetic power of the state delivered through high-velocity rounds and precision guided munitions. This deification of kinetic power ensures that the "warrior" never has to look beyond the cockpit for moral justification. If the aircraft is the Lord, then its mission is by definition holy, and its results are beyond the reach of human ethical systems. This represents the total sacralization of violence, where the tools of destruction are treated with the reverence once reserved for the creator of life.

11.3 AI-Generated Messiahs and the Aesthetics of the Autocrat

The aesthetics of this political idolatry are further reinforced by the use of generative artificial intelligence to manufacture a "digital messiah." The President's distribution of images depicting himself in Christ-like poses—often accompanied by captions taking credit for the election of Pope Leo XIV—is a deliberate attempt to blur the lines between political leadership and divine incarnation. These images function as a form of "hyper-real iconography" that bypasses traditional theological scrutiny through immediate visual and emotional impact. By presenting the head of state as the true protector of the faith, the administration encourages a form of worship that is entirely decoupled from the actual teachings of Christianity. This aesthetics of the autocrat provides the visual language for a state religion that demands total loyalty, positioning the President as the only bridge between the American people and the sacred, while casting the actual Successor of Peter as a redundant and "weak" foreign intruder.

11.4 The Pope's Anathema: Identifying the Delusion of Omnipotence

Pope Leo XIV's response to these developments has been a direct and courageous anathema against the "delusion of omnipotence" that currently grips American leadership. During his apostolic journey to Africa, the Pope explicitly condemned the manipulation of religion for military gain, describing the state's rhetoric as "dragging that which is sacred into darkness and filth." Leo XIV has correctly identified the "CSAR 25:17" incident not as a mistake, but as a theological theft. By asserting that the message of the Gospel "cannot be abused" and that he has "no fear" of the administration, the Pope has re-established the traditional boundary

between the City of God and the City of Man. His critique exposes the "Sandy 1" theology for what it is: a fragile and desperate attempt to grant the state a level of authority that no human institution can ever truly possess. The Pope's refusal to be "excommunicated" from the American moral landscape is the primary obstacle to the total triumph of this political idolatry.

11.5 The Sacrificial Altar of State Interests

Ultimately, the sacralization of violence leads to a world where the only "sacred" duty is the preservation of state interests. In the "CSAR 25:17" creed, the "lost children" are recovered and the "downed aviator" is saved, but the moral cost of the "furious anger" required to do so is never weighed. The state has built a sacrificial altar where the integrity of scripture, the authority of the Church, and the universal dignity of the human person are all offered up to maintain the "warrior ethos." This is the ultimate travesty: a nation that claims to be "under God" is instead attempting to place "God" under the command of its military mission planners. As long as the Department of War continues to treat the pulpit as a tactical asset and the Pope as a political adversary, it will remain trapped in a hyper-real blasphemy that sacrifices the truth of the sacred for the simulation of power.

12. Conclusion: Reclaiming the Sacred from the Cinematic

The recitation of CSAR 25:17 at the Pentagon on April 15, 2026, marks a definitive rupture in the relationship between the American state and the religious traditions it has historically claimed to uphold. What began as a cinematic homage in the late twentieth century has, through the mechanisms of media saturation and institutional decay, been elevated to the status of a state-sponsored creed. By replacing the prophetic warnings of the historical Ezekiel with the stylized rhetoric of a Hollywood hitman, the Department of War has signaled its preference for a "hyper-real" faith—one that offers the aesthetic of divine authority without the inconvenience of moral accountability. This paper has demonstrated that this incident is not an isolated gaffe but the culmination of a broader strategy of political idolatry, where the "Warrior Ethos" is used to sanctify violence and marginalize any external moral critique, most notably the voices of traditional ecclesial authority.

12.1 The Terminal Stage of Scriptural Drift

The evolution of Ezekiel 25:17 from a neglected scriptural fragment into a military prayer represents the terminal stage of scriptural drift. We have reached a point where the simulation of the sacred has achieved total dominance over the original source. For the leadership of the Department of War, the "truth" of a text is no longer found in its theological depth or its historical context, but in its utility as a tool for unit cohesion and tactical motivation. When a movie script is treated with more reverence than the Bible, the concept of "faith" is reduced to

a form of branding. This drift has hollowed out the American religious imagination, leaving behind a vacuum that is filled by the most aggressive and violent archetypes of popular culture. The "CSAR 25:17" incident is the final proof that for the current administration, the Word of God is merely a template to be rewritten by military mission planners.

12.2 The 'Sandy 1' Theology and the Erasure of the Transcendent

By deifying the "Sandy 1" call sign and the machinery of combat search and rescue, the state has institutionalized a religion of the technical. This hyper-real theology replaces the transcendent God of traditional religion with a mechanical savior—one that is always "strong," always "vengeful," and never "weak." This represents a total erasure of the transcendent from public life. When the state claims the power of life and death as its own sacred prerogative, it removes the necessary moral checks that have historically limited the exercise of military power. The "Sandy 1" savior does not demand repentance or offer mercy; it only delivers "kinetic effects." This shift from a God of justice to a god of vengeance represents a fundamental regression into a paganism that values power above all else, a transformation that should be deeply alarming to anyone who values the integrity of the sacred.

12.3 The Necessity of Ecclesial Resistance: The Pope's Anathema

The confrontation between the administration and Pope Leo XIV is the most critical spiritual struggle of the current era. The Pope's rejection of the "delusion of omnipotence" serves as the necessary anathema to the state's attempt at self-deification. By refusing to be "excommunicated" from the moral conversation by slurs and political attacks, the Holy Father reminds the world that the Gospel of peace is not subject to the tactical needs of any nation. The "Warrior Ethos" and the "Imitation of Christ" are in direct opposition, and the Pentagon's adoption of the Tarantino "creed" has made this conflict explicit. Reclaiming the sacred from the cinematic requires a return to the "weakness" of the Gospel—a recognition that true strength is found in the protection of the vulnerable and the pursuit of peace, rather than the promise of great vengeance.

12.4 Final Call: Separating the Pulpit from the Screen

To prevent the total descent into a state-sponsored cult of violence, there must be a rigorous effort to separate the pulpit from the screen. This requires a revitalization of scriptural literacy within both the civilian and military populations and a restoration of the independence of the military chaplaincy. The sacred must be reclaimed from those who would use it as a "cold-blooded thing to say" before a strike. The "CSAR 25:17" incident should serve as a wake-up call for all people of faith to defend the integrity of their traditions against the encroachments of a hyper-real political ideology. If we allow our scriptures to be replaced by screenplays and our saviors to be replaced by call signs, we will lose the very moral foundations that allow us to

critique the abuse of power. The travesty at the Pentagon is a warning: the path of the righteous man cannot be found in a movie script, but only in the enduring and difficult truth of a sacred tradition that refuses to bend its knee to the state.

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